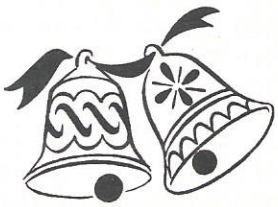
# COINQUEST, being a COUNTERMARK COLLECTORS' CIRCULAR

... Publication for Collectors of: Countermarked, Cut and Holed Coins, Tokens and Medals; Siege and Necessity Pieces; Love Tokens; and, Numismatic Literature.

NOVEMBER, 1975 VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2

HOLIDAY GREETINGS from FLORIDA



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# Counterstamps On U. S. Large Cents

By
Warren A. Lapp, M.D.
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Until the past several years, counterstamped large cents were considered by both collectors and dealers alike as mutilated or defaced coins. They were rarely offered in regular listings or in auction sales; and when they were included, they were generally listed in a more or less apologetic manner at a price, half or even less, than that of an unmutilated piece of similar variety and grade. Coin dealers whose stock included these oddities often kept the pieces in cabinet drawers for months or even years, collecting dust, before they could find a customer for them.

More recently, several notable and worthwhile articles and monographs about counterstamped coins have stimulated a general interest in the pieces and have created an unprecedented demand for them. Prices for such countermarked coins have soared to unbelievable heights in some cases, depending on the unusual nature or rarity of the countermark, although many common varieties are still available for a mere pittance of what an unmarked coin would bring.

A number of dealers now display their counterstamped pieces on bourse tables at local coin shows. Probably, because such coins once were held in so little esteem, many pieces have been discarded or destroyed over the years. At least, requests for them by individual collectors now outstrip their ready availability. Even so, it is only an occasional collector who makes a specialty of accumulating such specimens into large collections.

Q. David Bowers once noted that he had at one time owned 600 or so U. S. large cents with different countermarks. He disposed of his collection in 1958 to a New Jersey collector who probably still has them. Bowers remarked that he had done considerable research on the coins in his collection, identifying many of the countermarks by checking the registries of pewter and silver hallmarks as well as listings of gun makers' marks. He found that a number of countermarks were used provisionally in areas outside the United States.

Maurice M. Gould, formerly of Boston and now a noted West Coast numismatist and author, wrote in 1968 in a personal letter to me that he had once owned more than 6,000 counterstamped large cents. He stated that he had obtained many of the coins from John Gilbody of Winchester, Mass. He also observed that he had spent a great deal of his time in searching through old city directories and other such listings, trying to trace down names or initials, but was able to pin down only two pieces.

Ken Hallenbeck of Indiana, a current member of the ANA Board of Directors, has been doing most of the research on counterstamps in the past few years; and he has published a number of articles on this research regarding identification of the countermarks, cataloging by category, rarity, etc.

Although all denominations of U. S. and foreign coins have been counterstamped over the years, large cents were very frequently used for such purposes because the coins were readily available, widely circulated, and inexpensive.

As noted by previous researchers, there were a number of basic reasons for coins to be counterstamped:

I. to indicate official sanction, or adoption as legal specie, by a government other than the United States;

II. to use the coin as an advertising medium;

III. for personal reasons such as vanity or experimentation;

IV. for the testing of new dies by trial punches to determine the quality of impression which the die would make.

**I. TO INDICATE OFFICIAL SANCTION:**

Some governments, especially those in the West Indies and South America, resorted to the practice of makeshift coinage because they lacked the facilities for melting down the old coins, fashioning new planchets, and stamping them as coins of the realm. By counterstamping a coin, a government insured circulation within a particular designated area, as well as guaranteeing the coin's value at a certain fixed figure.

Large cents are recorded as having been counterstamped for the following countries: Barbados, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Curacao, Danish West Indies, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Liberia, Martinique, Mexico, Paraguay, Santo Domingo, Spain, St. Bartholomew, St. Helena (African coast), St. Lucia, St. Martin, St. Pierre, Tobago, and Vieque (Crab Island).

Gould also noted one large cent which had been counterstamped for use as a Mexican hacienda token.

**II. AS AN ADVERTISING MEDIUM; these fall into five categores:**

A. Many merchants counterstamped coins as store cards because it was a cheap way to advertise on a national basis. Some of the merchants offered to redeem the coins in trade, while others used the coins as admission tickets to theaters or sporting arenas. One of the more common examples of large cents used for advertising is the counterstamp "Devins & Bolton, Montreal." Devins and Bolton were druggists in that city.

B. Some large cents were counterstamped with patriotic legends, of which "Beautiful America" and "Union For Ever" are known examples.

C. A number of large cents were used by political parties and were counterstamped with political slogans. The most common example of these is "Vote The Land Free," a slogan used by the Free Soil party during the campaign of 1848. The candidate of the Free Soil party, Martin Van Buren, was defeated in the election by Zachary Taylor.

D. Some cents were stamped with the names of states or cities. I have a number of such in my own collection, including "N. York," "Portsmouth," "Boston," "Springfield," and "Oregon."

E. Fraternal organizations also made use of counterstamped large cents. Some were counterstamped with Masonic insignia and used as pocket pieces; these have become commonly known as Masonic pennies. Others have been stamped with insignia of the Ku Klux Klan. For several of its annual meetings, the Early American Coppers Club has stamped worn large cents with EAC 1967 and similar dates, passing them out as souvenirs to the members who attended.

**(Continued Next Issue)**

# Ancient Cmks — Problems and Promise

By F. G. Ruben

Numerous ancient Greek and Roman coins bear counterstamps, very few of which have yielded their significance. Represented are a confusing variety of abbreviated inscriptions and symbols, indistinguishable portraits and figures. The passage of two thousand years has done much to deface legibility and history.

Series which are almost devoid of counterstamps are as significant as those that are not. Imperial Roman bronze after Nero are almost void of marks, perhaps an indication of monetary stability and an attitude later imprinted on the coins, "Sacra Moneta" (sacred money). Imperial silver bears nothing but test cuts, and in general, silver was far less frequently marked than bronze.

Outside Asia Minor and the Middle East, marks are the exception, while a few of these are not common without some countermark. In 250 years of issues of Roman Egypt no example is present from an area where foreign coins were not permitted.

Counterstamps are usually associated with emergency or convenience, especially true among the ancients since overstriking was common. Silver and gold circulated by bullion value, eliminating the need for local sanction, yet the smaller denominations still represented a day's wage. Bronze itself carried intrinsic value and was the everyday currency.

In an emergency or for convenience it was necessary to modify existing coins. Restriking took time and skilled artisans, yet, gem engravers were available to produce punches in extreme miniature. This can surely account for some of the fine detail in many counterstamps, while the hand of the blacksmith is evident in many others, whose letters are retrograde and crude.

With a few generalities much can be surmised about a counterstamp on its face. A crudely cut letter cannot be classed with a sculpted bust. A mark on silver may be a test mark, but on bronze it may be a re-valuation or a city badge. A little knowledge and much logic can at least clear away the impossible possibilities, and lead to an understanding of why so many little marks are found on so many coins.

## *NIFADCHUP*

No relation to hiccup ... just another acronym.

N — Names
I — Initials
F — Figures (numbers)
A — Animals (including humans)
D — Devices
C — Combinations
H — Holes
U — Unknown
P — Pieces

With a view towards cataloging world countermarks, these groups are offered for your contemplation and comments.

It might appear to some that the editor is acronym crazy, but it is a simple, efficient way to memorize a large number of dissimilar items.

This acronym would be used in conjunction with the two presented in the mail bid catalog.

# CQ Rates Increase (Already!)

Beginning with the next issue of CQ, annual subscription rates will be increased to $6 in North America and $7.50 elsewhere; delivery remains first class and air mail, respectively.

Current subscribers are offered the opportunity to extend their subscriptions by one year **only** at the current rates; this offer expires 30 days after this issue is mailed.

Increased production costs and a lack of advertising are the motivating factors behind the increase. The original printing cost quotation was good for only 60 days; that quote has increased **twice** since inception, from an original $65, to $85, now to $110! (This is since May of this year.)

Further, as most everyone is aware, postage will increase after the holidays ... the usual figure being quoted is 13 cents for first class delivery, which will be delivered by air mail (supposedly).

Typesetting costs have risen from 30 to 40 cents per column inch, and another increase is expected immediately after this issue, although, the typesetter for CQ is not under a contractural agreement, and those rates just may increase before this issue is completed.

Rampant ... galloping ... inflation continues to be a dominant factor in everyone's life. Up and up she goes ... where she stops, nobody knows ...

## *Obock Concoct ...*

**Gregory Brunk supplied this photo of an Obock cmk, but, he said, "I can't trace a specimen of it before about two years ago and am almost certain it's a new concoction." He said Obock was supposed to be a city in India, but he was unable to find it on any maps. (With three encyclopedias and two world atlases at hand, I can't find it, either. — Ed.)**

## Auction PRL

Subscribers who received free catalogs and who now desire a prices realized list, should remit $2.00 for a copy.

Non-subscribers must remit $3.00.

The PRL will be mailed about December 1.

## *Catalogers, Awake!*

Subscribers are needed to compile lists of countermarks for eventual publication in a general "World" catalog; collecting specialties would be an appropriate area in which volunteers could be most useful to the program, as well as updating and increasing their own collections.

Volunteers are requested to notify CQ if they're willing to act as a clearinghouse agent for cmkd coins, tokens, etc., by metal, country, denomination, dates, or whatever.

Compilation of "everything in sight" would be the immediate goal, but publication in a catalog would depend on a variety of factors, which could be determined at a later date.

Through private correspondence, several subscribers have offered their services, but many more are needed. Readers are urged to offer their comments, and time, in this endeavor.

# *Some History Of Tunisian Countermarks*

By
Kenneth M. MacKenzie
Tenafly, New Jersey

Tunis is a north African republic situated between Algeria and Libya. It came under the control of the Ottoman Turks when Sinan Pasha conquered it in 1574. Up to that time the Husainid rulers had sought the help of the Spaniards against the Turks of Algiers, but after the invasion and defeat, the ruler, Muhammad was taken to Istanbul and the dynasty came to an end.

The occupying force was divided into units of one hundred men commanded by an officer called the **dey**. The head of the Ottoman administration was at first the Pasha appointed by the Porte (the government in Constantinople), assisted by an officer called **bey** who supervised the actual administration and collection of taxes.

A short time afterwards a revolt of the troops brought about a shift of control and power to the deys. Gradually a dynastic rule again evolved after one of the **beys** named Murad was honored by the Sultan with the title of Pasha; he exerted power which reduced the deys to figure heads, and the beylicate was kept in his family for generations.

In 1665 Tunisia was opened to European trade and the Muradist **beys** increased their strength by controlling revenue from customs duties and monopolizing the sale of agricultural produce to the foreign merchants.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the economy of the country had gone from bad to worse. The French occupation of Algeria, and the growing strength of the European consuls in Tunisia coincided with increased Ottoman activity and interference which resulted in Ahmed Bey (1837-55) accepting a form of Ottoman soverignty to avoid being deposed. This event marked the end of the period of independence which the **beys** had enjoyed for centuries.

His successor, Muhammad Bey (1855-59), inherited an authority which was supposed to be supreme but in actual practice was erroded by the powers of the consuls and deterioration of the economy. Muhammad es-Sadik succeded Muhammad as bey in 1859 and in the following year a constitution converted Tunisia in theory to a limited monarchy.

It recognized the **bey** as head of the state and the succession as hereditary. The constitution failed in practice and was suspended four years after its promulgation.

A period of rapid expansion of European economic interests occurred in the 1860s, particularly those of France and Italy. By 1862 the Tunisian state had borrowed twenty eight million francs locally, and after the **bey** had been told that much better terms would be obtained, loans were sought abroad.

By the year 1865 the financial situation was worse than ever. A rebellion, a cholera epidemic and a typhus epidemic in 1868 reduced the country to a state of misery and poverty as never before experienced and more money was borrowed.

Tunisia lost its independence with the formation of an Interantional Financial Commission when they couldn't meet the payments on their debts. After years of economic disruption and intrigue by the big powers, French troops arrived in Tunis on 5th April 1881, and on May 12th Muhammad es-Sadik signed a peace treaty which deprived him of his independence. He died in October 1882 and his successor 'Ali Bey was forced to sign a declaration on June 8, 1883, establishing the French protectorate.

The coinage of Tunis, being an Ottoman province, was struck in the name of the reigning Sultan in Constantinople, and usually had the name of the ruling **bey** on the other side of the coin.

Counterstamping of the coins was done to indicate a revaluation of the currency. Under the authority of the beylical decrees of 21st April and 22nd May, 1872, (1289AH), a reduction in the values of the copper coins was denoted by the use of circular counterstamps, one being 5mm in diameter with the Arabic number "1", and another 6.5mm in diameter with the numeral "2", indicating a value in kharubs. (Figs. "b" and c").

A later decree dated May 30th 1878, (1295AH), authorized the stamping of silver and gold coins with a five pointed star denoting a revaluation. (Fig. "a"). However, coins with and without counterstamps continued to be circulated together, and up to 1891 coins continued to be struck without modification.

There is one counterstamp in the form of a dagger (Fig. "d") which appears on a copper coin of Abdul Aziz / with Bey Muhammad es-Sadik. It is a 2 Kharub coin dated 1289. This type of coin isn't found with the stamps referred to above; it is quite probable that it was authorized under the two early decrees but so far this writer has been unable to verify the facts and circumstance surrounding such a counterstamp on a Tunisian or any other Ottoman coin.

A list of the coin types with counterstamps including the known year dates of such coins is given herewith:

1. Copper coins with ) and ⌐ counterstamps.

a) Abdul Mejid. (name of the ruling bey not on the coin). numeral 1 on 6 nasris (29mm) 1267 (see fig. 1) appears also on years 1263, '64, 65'66, '68 and '69.

b) Abdul Mejid. "El Ghazi" (Bey Muhammad) (Inscription A and G) numeral 1 on 6 aspers (29mm) 1272 (photo 1) also on yr 1274, numeral 2 on 13 aspers (32 mm) 1273 (photo 2) also on yrs 1272, '74, 75

c) Abdul Aziz. (Bey Muhammad es-Sadik) (Inscription B and F) dagger on 2 kharub (30 mm) 1289. (photo 3)

2. Silver Coins with a five pointed star counterstamp.

a) Abdul Aziz (Bey Muhammad es-Sadik) (Inscription B and F)

1 piastre years 1279, 1281, '82, '84, '87-93.

2 piastre years 1287-'93

4 piastre years 1288, 1292 (see photo 4) and 1293.

b) Abdul Hamid. (Bey Muhammad es-Sadik) (Inscription D and F)

1 piastre 1293, '94

2 piastre 1294

4 piastre 1293, '94

c) Abdul Hamid "El Ghazi" (Bey Muhammad es-Sadik) (Inscription C and F)

1 piastre 1294

2 piastre 1294

4 piastre 1294, '96.

3. Gold Coins with a five pointed star counterstamp.

**(Continued on Next Page)**

# *Tunisian Countermarks ...*

**(Continued from Preceding Page)**

a) Abdul Aziz (Bey Muhammad es-Sadik) (Inscription B and F)
5 piastres years 1288, '92
10 piastres years 1280, '81, '84, '87, '88.

b) Abdul Hamid "El Ghazi". (Bey Muhammad es-Sadik.) (Inscription C and F)
5 piastres year 1294.

The monetary system in use at the time, was 104 burbes equals 52 aspers / nasris equals 16 kharubs equals 1 Piastre (known as Sebili, or riyal sebili). The effect of the devaluation was to reduce the piastre by 3 kharubs, and in relation to French currency, 1 Franc equals 2 piastres.

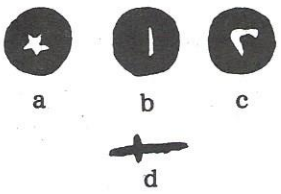

Figure 1

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

**PHOTO 1**
**c/s b**

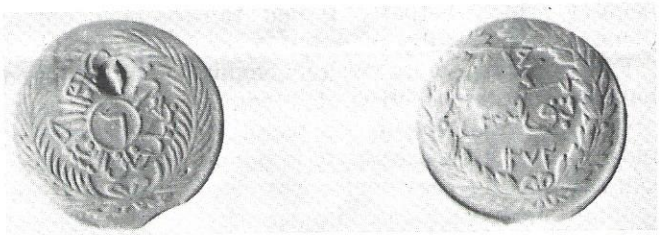

**PHOTO 2**
**c/s c**

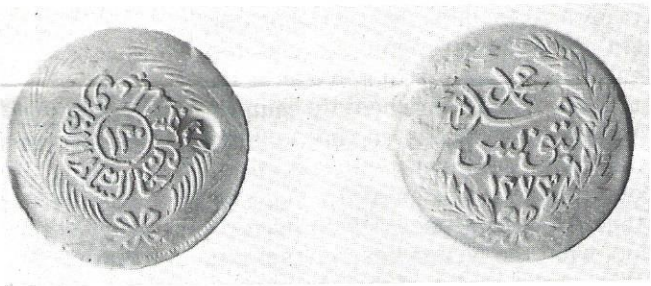

**PHOTO 3**
**c/s d**

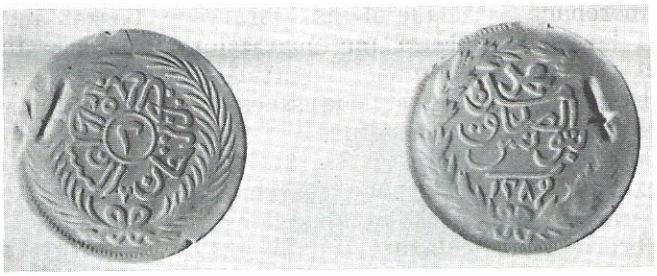

**PHOTO 4**
**c/s a**

# BEGINNING: A TENTATIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF COUNTERMARKS

By
Gregory G. Brunk
Waterloo, Iowa

It's unfortunate there hasn't been a general listing available for this area of numismatics before now. This has hampered the attribution of countermarks and has resulted at times in mis-listing or multiple identification of certain pieces. An attempt has been made here to locate articles — not under the country to which they identify a countermark — to the country which actually issued the piece.

Four years ago the writer began putting together a listing of all materials he could locate on countermarks; this is the result. It is not a complete listing, for many works containing information on countermarks cannot be "found" except by a physical acquaintance with a particular book.

Until recently it was not common in reviews to include the fact that certain research commented on countermarks of a country. In general, if the coins of a country are heavily countermarked, most books on that country will have information on those countermarks in them. In such instances the references given here reflect what the writer has come across; other works not listed may be expected to contain similar information.

This listing has been composed from three sources: 1). The Dictionary Catalogue of the Library of the American Numismatic Society, 2). Comments found with the articles listed in the past ninety-odd issues of Numismatic Literature, also published by the A.N.S., 3). An extensive page by page search of periodicals and books in a number of libraries, particularly those of the American Numismatic Association, the Universities of Illinois, Iowa, and Chicago, and the writer's personal library.

An apology is in order for the variations in listings in this bibliography. In some cases volume numbers will be given, while in others a year may be refered to. Transliterations of titles may vary. Because such a wide variety of sources was used, not all of the articles could be physically traced to the original published document to check each listing.

Included here is a listing of the most important works describing or pricing countermarked coins. The majority of material available on countermarks is hidden in short magazine articles or in detailed catalogs of coins of particular countries, such as Rabino's **Coins, Medals and Seals of the Shahs of Iran.**

Generally, particular country catalogs are not listed here unless they contain a great deal of information on countermarks. If you have a coin from the 17th century onward which is countermarked, but the countermark is not listed in any of the following sources — or major catalogs of the coins of the country it appears on — it is virtually certain the piece is not an official government issue.

The following will be found most useful:

## A. GENERAL WORKS

Buttrey, Theodore V., Jr., **Coinage of the Americas** (New York, 1973).

Craig, William, **Coins of the World 1750 - 1850** (Racine, 1971).

Friedberg, Robert, **Coins of the British World** (New York, 1962).

Lapa, Frank A., **Check List of Siege Coins and Necessity Issues** 16th - 20th Century (San Diego, 1968).

Gordon, Ralph C., "A Large Wastebasket and Some Commen Sense", **Numismatic Commentary and Mail Bid Sale** (Henry Christensen, March 30, 1973, and Jan. 25, 1974). A list of criteria for detecting concoctions.

Krause, Chester L., and Clifford Mishler, **Standard Catalog of World Coins** (Iola, 1973).

Mailliet, Prosper, **Catalogue descriptif des monnaies obsidionales et de necessite** (Brussles, 1868, 1870).

Pridmore, F., "The Countermark of the Crowned V", **Numismatic Circular,** Aug. - Sept. 1954, pp. 339-341.

**Coins of the British Commonwealth of Nations to the End of the Reign of George VI 1952,** Part II — Asian Territories (London, 1965); Part III — West Indies (London, 1965).

In addition, Pridmore has written a long series of articles dealing with specific areas of British colonial coinage. These have appeared in the **Numismatic Circular** over the past thirty years and have a wealth of information about countermarks, but are too numerous to list seperately.

Raymond, Wayte, **The Silver Dollars of North and South America** (Racine, 1959).

Remick, Jerome, et. al., **The Guidebook and Catalogue of British Commonwealth Coins 1649 - 1971** (Winnipeg, 1971).

Schulman, Hans M. F. Galleries, "The Howard Gibbs Collection of Counterstamped, Necessity and Siege Coins of the Americas", (March 18, 19, 1966, New York). Many of the pieces assigned locations in this catalog are only mutilations without significance, while a few are concoctions. It is a very good work for research.

Scholten, C., **The Coins of the Dutch Overseas Territories, 1601 - 1948** (Amsterdam, 1953).

Westerfield, Wiley, **An Introduction to Siege Coins** San Diego, 1967).

Zay, E., **Histoire monetaire des colonies Francaises** (Paris, 1892, 1904)

## B. EUROPE

Davis, W. J., **The Nineteenth Century Token Coinage of Great Britain, Ireland, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man** (London, 1969).

Erlanger, Herbert J., "Some German Counterstamps of the Late Seventeenth Century and the Standard of the Leipzig Convention", **American Numismatic Society Museum Notes,** Vol. VII (1957), pp. 143-181.

Friederich, K., **Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Kontermarkenwesens** (Munster, 1970). This is an extensive listing of German counterstamps.

Grierson, Philip, "The Crimean Countermarks of Heraclius", **Numismatic Chronicle,** Series VII, Vol. VII (1966), pp. 221-224. Early seventh century Byzantine countermarks are described.

Hamilton, Peter F., and Antonio Trigueiros, "Fake Countermarks Plague Hobby", **World Coins,** Jan. 1975, pp. 46-52. A study of the Azores Crowned G. P. countermark.

**(Continued on Next Page)**

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Ives, Herbert E., "Counterstamps on English and Continental Nobles", **American Numismatic Society Museum Notes,** Vol. II (1947), pp. 53-61.

Katz, Viktor, **Kontramarky na Prazskych Grosich** (Prague, 1927), Countermarks found on Czech groschen are described; an excellent study.

Krause, Delbert R., "Ecu Converts to Batzen in One Stamp", **World Coins,** Oct. 1973, pp. 1598-1606. A listing of French crowns on which the countermarks of Bern and Vaud are found.

Krusy, Hans, "Gegengestempelte Paper Groschen die nicht den Namen Wenzels III", **Hamburger Beitrage zur Numismatik,** 1966, pp. 525-530. Countermarks on Czech groschen are described.

"Der Fund von Aufhofen, Krs. Biberach Riss vergraben 1435-40", **"Hamburger Beitrage** zur Numismatik, Vol. 6, No. 18 / 19 (1964/5), pp. 95-110. Contents of a countermarked hoard of Czech coins are listed.

Manville, Harrington E., "British Countermarks According to W. J. Davis: True and False", **Numismatic Circular,** April 1972, pp. 134-136; June pp. 231-233.

"Silver Tradesmen's Countermarks in British Collections", **Numismatic Circular,** Dec. 1973, pp. 462-466, Jan. 1974, pp. 2-4; Dec. pp. 470-474.

Pridmore, F., "The Bank of England Oval and Octagonal Countermarked Dollars of 1797-1804", **Numismatic Circular,** April 1955, pp. 163-166; June, pp. 259-266.

"The Countermarked Copper Coinage of Malta", **Numismatic Circular,** 1950, pp. 191-193.

Purvey, Frank, **Coins and Tokens of Scotland** (London. 1972).

Sammut, J., "Lascaris and His Countermarked Copper 4 and 2 Tari Pieces", **Seaby Coin and Medal Bulletin,** June 1964, pp. 205 - 207. Countermarks of the Knights of Malta are described and explained.

Schulman, Hans M. F. Galleries, "The Howard D. Gibbs Collection of Counterstamped and Siege Coins of the British Isles" (Nov. 19, 1960).

Scott, J. Garvin, "French and Other European Bronze Coins Countermarked in England for Use as Advertising Tickets in the Late Nineteenth Century", **Seaby Coin and Medal Bulletin,** Dec. 1970, pp. 443-453; March, pp. 82-87; April, p. 124.

**British Countermarks on Copper and Bronze Coins** (London, 1975)

Seaby, Peter, and Monica Bussell, **British Tokens and Their Values** (London,1970).

Szauer, Emil, "Catalog of Irish Countermarks", **World Coins,** 1966, pp. 344-350, 504-507, 854-858; 1967, pp. 212-216, 760-764.

Walter, A. W., "A List of English Countermarks Struck for Advertizing Purposes Upon the Copper Coins Circulating in Great Britain", **Numismatic Circular,** Oct. 1965, pp. 423-424.

Westholm, Alfred, "A Hoard of Bronze Coins of Constans II", **Nordisk Numismatisk Årsskrift,** 1940, pp. 143-147. Byzantine countermarks of the middle and late seventh century were found in this hoard.

Whetmore, S.A.H., "Notes on Some Issues of Countermarked Spanish Dollars", **British Numismatic Journal,** 1957, pp. 620-648.

**C. CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES**

Gingras, Larry, "The J.O.P. Silver Dollar", **Canadian Numismatic Journal,** Oct. 1959, pp. 363-364.

Gilmore, Starr, "Canadian Dollars Countermarked 'JOP'", **Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine,** April 1960, pp. 964-968.

Hallenbeck, Kenneth L. "Countermarked Canadian Coins and Tokens", **Canadian Numismatic Journal,** May 1965, pp. 183-184.

"Hallmarks on U.S. Large Cents", **The Journal of the Token and Medal Society,** 1964, pp. 41-43.

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Slabaugh, Arlie R., "Advertising Money", **Numismatic Scrapbook Magazine,** July 1960, pp. 1890-1903.

Yeoman, R. S., "The 1848 Quarter Eagle with CAL.", **The Numismatist,** July 1953, pp. 674-685.

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## "Jaws" Leaves Mark

Subscriber Lionel Holland, a partner in the firm of Eidelstein & Holland, Haifa, Israel, has sent out an "SOS" for help with a peculiar (and dangerous?) countermark on a 1753 (Hall) Maria Theresa thaler.

The cmk is "... a zig-zag pattern like a row of shark's teeth, (Jaws!) 13 or 14 in all," according to Holland. He described the mark as being three millimeters wide and 18mm long, in the right field of the obverse, aligned vertically.

Holland noted a similar cmk on a Guatemalan eight reales in Elizondo's first edition of Eight Reales and Pesos of the New World, page 123.

Holland may be contacted at the firm's address, 61 Herzl St., Haifa 33504, Israel, if anyone has any information on the cmk.

## *Coins Unknown, Unloved, Missing ...*

**Information concerning the whereabouts of these two pieces would be appreciated by their owner, John Kromas, Taylor, Texas. Oddly, both pieces are counterfeits made of bronze, and silver washed. George III piece is a Bank of England 5 - Shilling, 1804; Mintmark and assayer on the Charles IIII 8-reales are unknown. Both are very well executed copies, but the wash on the 5-Shilling has worn through in a number of spots. Information welcomed by Kromas, whose address is 520 West 4th St., Taylor, TX 76574.**

# *Satirical Coins Not Love Tokens*

By
**Richard Dickerson**
**Pasadena, Calif.**

The appearance of a new journal such as **Coinquest,** devoted to counterstamped and altered coins, is cause for celebration. However, it is important to define the field carefully at the beginning of any new enterprise, and I would like to take issue with one point in the definitions given on page 2 of the May, 1975 issue. After eight definitions of various countermarked, cut, holed, and siege pieces, comes:

**"9. Love Token (LT), noun: A coin, token, medal or chit upon which has been engraved, etched or scratched, any group of letters, numbers, or devices, or combination thereof."**

This certainly describes a significant category of numismatic material, but the name "Love Token" won't do. That term is applicable only to some of the engraved coins: those that were done as personal mementos between friends. For the vast array of politically or satirically engraved coins, "Non-love Tokens" or even "Hate Tokens" would be a more suitable description.

Conflict seems to call out a greater passion and ingenuity in humans than agreement (try to get a newspaper to headline good news); for this reason, politically and satirically engraved coins hold a greater fascination for the writer than the personal mementos that alone deserve the name of "Love Tokens".

Most of these political and satirical coins were engraved with care and forethought, and one of their attractions lies in deciphering what was in the mind of the engraver at the time. Matching wits successfully with the original creator of the piece can turn an ordinary-looking mutilated coin into a prized showpiece. This brief article describes some pieces in the author's collection, without going into the details behind each one. In future issues of **Coinquest,** space and editor willing, I propose to describe a few of these pieces individually, telling you as much as I have been able to figure out about them, and in some cases asking for help in their interpretation.

The first thirteen coins accompanying this article are from France, a country that was especially rich in satirical engravings and counterstamps. This is only natural; in a century in which coins and medals were important tools in mass propaganda, the French had lost the respect for Kings and Emperors that still existed in many countries.

Coin number 1 is a 5-Franc coin of Napoleon Bonaparte, dated 1810, with a counterstamp that looks like a grimacing cat. It actually is a screech-owl, and was the sign of the Royalist guerillas in the Vendee, a district on the Atlantic seaboard. Their leader, Jean Cottereau, was also known as Jean Chouan ("John Screech-owl"), for reasons that we will come back to in a later article. In the meantime, look up the **Chouans** in any good French history.

The second piece is a genuine mystery for which I solicit your help. On a 5-Franc piece of Louis XVIII dated 1823, someone has crudely scratched a floppy hat, a pipe at a jaunty angle, a wing collar and a cravat. What did this signify? The making of a bourgeoise or at least a civilian out of the King?

Louis XVIII was a brother of the guillotined Louis XVI, and leader of the house of Bourbon, which was restored to power after the downfall of Bonaparte. Did these embellishments mean anything more to the engraver than simple disrespect? As we shall see, a civilian hat, collar, and sometimes a pipe, were common motifs among coin engravers.

Coin No. 3 shows a crown above two crossed tricolor flags, with the date 1830 below, all engraved on a minor coin of Louis XVI from 1791. If the tricolor came in with the Revolution, why would it be associated in 1830 with a royal crown? More on this later, but for now, look up Louis Philippe. While you are thinking about him, ask yourself why someone would counterstamp one of his 5-Franc coins with an eagle as in No. 4, and give him an engraved Pinocchio nose? Together, these changes call Louis Philippe a liar and an Imperialist. Why? The answer makes this one of the most historically interesting coins in the collection.

The next nine coins are of Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, nephew of the great Napoleon. He was President of the Second Republic from 1848 to 1852, and Emperor from then until 1870. Numismatically, he was the most vilified ruler of all time, by a wide margin.

On Coin No. 5, President Louis Napoleon, "Voleur" (thief), is given a stubble beard, lice in his hair, a clay pipe, a neck chain, and a cheek tattoo reading "Forçat 100" (Convict No. 100). On the following coin, someone has stamped Napoleon III (now Emperor) with three crucifixes and a hole in the forehead.

Coins 7 and 8 are counterstamped TRAITRE, LACHE (coward), GREDIN (crook), and SEDAN (the locale of his defeat by Prussia and surrender in 1870). These are mementoes of the Franco-Prussian War, which finished off the Second Empire as well as its Emperor. So are Coins 9 through 12, all of which display Napoleon III in an engraved German helmet as a way of suggesting treason or sellout at Sedan. On No. 9, the eagle on the reverse is recarved into a skull, and on No. 12, the Emperior is given Satanic pointed ears.

Coin No. 13 is typical of a class of mutilated coins of Napoleon III, making him appear as a swine, a fool, a chinless adolescent, a crybaby, or a monster. This particular engraver (as well as several others), discovered that the back half of the Emperor's head, turned sideways, looks vaguely like a pig's head. He helped the resemblance along with tusks, and added the caption, "Swine contest, First prize".

Coin No. 14 is a miniature masterpiece that does not fit into the category either of engravings or counterstamps. Two small effigies of European rulers have been soldered to the wings of the Prussian eagle on a 1-Thaler of Wilhelm dated 1866. Who might these rulers be, and what does the altered coin commemorate? As clues, consider the date 1866 and the mutton-chop whiskers on the ruler at the left. Contemporary coin portraits from Yeoman can help in identifying the ruler at the right.

The Papal States are represented by Nos. 15 - 17. On one 5-Lire coin, Pope Pius IX is transformed into Bismarck, and on the other, to a German burgher with skullcap, meerschaum pipe, and civilian coat and collar. On the little 1-Lira, a meerschaum and a tasseled German stocking cap have been added. For clues as to what these meant, look up

**(Continued on Page 10)**

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# Pridmore Selects "Countermark" Over "Counterstamp"

By
**Major Fred Pridmore**
**Taunton, Somerset, England**

In the pilot issue of Coinquest, May, 1975, a few items are suggested for discussion, including, "What's the difference between countermark (cmk) and counterstamp (csp,) if any?" In the next column CQ offers CMK Definitions, and suggests a panel to determine a set of terms acceptable and understood by numismatists. Under **Countermark** we are offered two definitions.

On page 10, vol. I, no. 1, of CQ, Kenneth Hallenbeck states a preference for the term "counterstamp" as opposed to "countermark," and expresses the opinion that it is not really important which word you choose.

While all collectors of any experience are perfectly familiar with either term as used in numismatic literature, and also other words encountered, e.g., counterpunch, countersign and counterstruck, the most correct form is **countermark.**

That word, or its abbreviations, cm, cm, c/mk, as applied or used in the numismatic sense, describes any mark stamped or punched upon a coin or medal (and these two words are to be understood in their widest meaning,) after it has left the mint of manufacture.

The word **countermark** has been used by English numismatists since the end of the seventeenth century (See John Evelyn. Numismata. A Discourse of Medals, Ancient and Modern, London, 1697,) and with some exceptions, so have the older generation of noted North American writers.

For example: Albert R. Frey, A Dictionary of Numismatic Names, New York, 1917, follows the normal form **countermark,** and does not list any of the alternatives mentioned above.

F. G. Duffield in A Trial List of the Countermarked Coins of the World, originally published in The Numismatist, 1919 - 22, and subsequently reprinted as a booklet, also employs the term **countermark** and the abbreviation "cm" throughout his long listings.

However, from the North American publications available to me, these do show **punched** and **counterstamped** as being in fairly frequent use from 1851, but the principal user of the term **counterstamp** appears to have been Howland Wood.

Wood, in his Coinage of the West Indies, New York, 1915, used several terms: stamp, stamped, unstamped, counterstamp, counterstamped, punch, punched and countermark. He followed no standard form and evidently used the first word in his thoughts at the time of writing, which avoided repetition; the most common word he used is counterstamp.

As Wood's work became the standard reference, it was used extensively by North American sale catalogers and dealers, and they, too, used the word **counterstamp** with the result that it is now an accepted and understood term in American numismatics to describe any secondary punch or mark applied to coins or medals.

However, if a panel of experts eventually meets to establish a set of terms, then I would submit that **countermark** should be the one selected.

**(Continued next issue)**

## *Satirical Coins ...*

**(Continued from Page 8)**

"Kulturkampf" in a history of Bismarck's Germany.

Nos. 18 and 19 are coins of Paul Krueger of South Africa, again with hat and pipe. On 18 they have been cut out of other metal and soldered in place; on 19 they have merely been engraved. This is the first example so far of the top hat, which is such a common addition to the coins of Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany (Nos. 20-22). What did a top hat signify to a late nineteenth century South African or German? Were the Krueger coins the models for the Kaiser Wilhelm pieces?

A correspondent in Essen, Wolfgang Schulze, tells me that to a German, a top hat implied a **very** formal occasion such as a funeral. It would have been appropriate to put a top hat on the Kaiser for the funeral of the German Empire in 1918. Another possible interpretation is that the engraver, in effect, was telling the Kaiser to take his hat and be off. The inscription on the hat on No. 22 reads, "Out with you, 1918", but using the familiar second person that never would have been employed with an Emperor. In impoliteness, a better translation would be, "Beat it!"

These are few examples of politically counterstamped and engraved coins that would be grossly mislabeled as "Love Tokens". There is no love lost on these coins between ruler and engraver. I have deliberately intermixed engraved and counterstamped political coins to emphasize that a distinction based on technique used would be artificial. The same person or group that would engrave a German helmet on the effigy of Napoleon III would quite likely stamp TRAITRE on others of his coins; and the man who prepared No. 4 combined both engraving and a counterstamp.

It would be better to regard all of these as a category of **Political and Satirical Alterations,** and then to subdivide these into (a) Engraving, (b) Counterstamps, and (c) Applique (layers of metal added to the coin surface, as the two effigies on No. 14 or the top hat on the Kaiser). The definitions in the May issue of **Coinquest** might be modified as follows:

**9. Love Token (LT), noun: A coin, token, medal or chit upon which has been engraved, etched, or scratched any group of letters, numbers, or devices, as an expression of personal friendship, love, or esteem between private parties.**

**10. Poltiical or Satirical Engraving (PSE), noun: As category 9, but executed with the goal of expressing support or opposition to a ruler, party, issuing body, or other public group or cause.**

The term "Love Token" then should be restricted to include only actual expressions of love or friendship. The coins illustrating this article frequently are rather pungent expressions of feelings, but love is not among them.

I would welcome correspondence with other readers of **Coinquest** on this subject, addressed to me at: Department of Chemistry; California Institute of Technology; Pasadena, Calif. 91125. If you have especially interesting pieces, perhaps they can serve as subjects for future **Coinquest** articles.

# Plastics and Coins

By
James A. Brown
Newark, N. J.

(Continued from Last Issue)

Plastic as it is commonly called today is usually associated with a transparent material whose first appearance as Celluloid many people are familiar with, and such items as the celluloid mens' shirt collars, which were highly inflamable and had a habit of catching fire in the old Mack Sennet comedy movies.

As the plastics being used to make coin holders are usually non-inflamable except under intense heat, (even concrete will burn if you get it hot enough,) we are not concerned with a fire hazard; but, when being worked by high speed metal tools, caution should be observed not to overheat the cutting tool, which, if hot, will force the plastic out of shape at certain temperatures, only a few degrees beyond that of hot water.

Not just any kind of transparent, translucent or opaque plastic is of benefit to the keeping of coins, but that which is known as Plexiglass or the well known nylon is of the type most commonly used for this purpose; Plexiglass is one of the polyethylenes of the more inert and resistant kinds and so more useful to our purpose. There are others more expensive or specialized such as Teflon used for corrosive resistant gaskets, or MEK, which has its place in the fiberglass industry; these latter two have their limitations and specializations, but neither is chemically inert to polished precious metals.

Chemical sets can be bought to make liquid plastic for shaping, for home manufacture or use, but the resulting mess, the investment in ovens for curing and other equipment is not for the amateur but rather for the experienced manufacturer. Mail order home projects are highly speculative and few benefit except the seller of such material, who usually commands inflated prices with glowing promises thrown in for free.

Plastics have characteristics which lend themselves to a wide variety of purposes. Some can be magnetized and are being used for dental plates to repell each other in reverse of the usual magnetic principle, and so prevent "fallout." There is resin-glass used in parabolic telemetry; there is Lexan which is bullet resistant; P.V.C., common now to the pipe-fitting industry used as acid drain pipes. There are many others.

Before I go too far off the beam let me return to the one type of plastic we are interested in at the moment; it is the plastic acrylite of the polyethylene family which seems to be the most adaptable so far of the abundance of the man-made fibers for our purpose of coin holders. This particular plastic seems to be, by the concensus of chemical experts and my own experience, to have less of the disturbing elements which tarnish copper and silver than any of the others available.

Fortunately for our hobby, many wholesalers are willing to sell small lots outside of the trade.

There are a number of tests one can use when buying either the finished product or the sheets or pieces to tell if it is adaptable or really as represented. One I use frequently is to pour a few drops of mineral spirits on the product and if the item starts to dissolve or cloud up, then it is not Plexiglass.

There are other tests and pitfalls, but if one is persistent, of an inquiring mind and in search of adventure, for them the field is wide and I bid you welcome to the fantastic and imaginative world of the future, and of plastics.

## *Subscribers Lost!*

There're eight subscribers "out there" who've been lost "in here" at the home office.

The procedure is that, when a subscription is **received**, it's immediately typed on a self-adhesive label, then the whole sheet is photocopied for filing and future use.

Well, someplace along the line a group of eight labels weren't photocopied, and the labels were mailed on the first regular issue of CQ.

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## CLASSIFIED ADS

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**WANTED:** Photographs of coins of Napoleon Bonaparte with "cat" or screech owl counterstamps, for photo archives and study. Richard Dickerson, Dept. of Chemistry, Cal Tech, Pasadena, CA 91125.

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**SPECIALIZING** in U.S. half dimes, dimes and half dollars, 1807-37. Would like to hear of any countermarks on coins that area. ANA, ANS, BHNC, JRCS. David J. Davis, P. O. Box 205, Ypsilanti, MI 48197.

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# Notes On Devins & Bolton Countermarks

By
Maurice M. Gould
Tustin, Ca.

The Devins & Bolton Token, Breton No. 569, was manufactured in England and shipped to Montreal, where it was seized at the Customs. Mr. Devins did not order the coins and therefore did not accept them when the shipment came in, much to his surprise.

Through various means however, a number did get into the hands of collectors and this piece is highly prized today, as it actually follows the size and style of the Canadian Victoria Large Cent.

Devins & Bolton, nevertheless, are best known numismatically for the counterstamp with the company name, which was stamped on many thousands of Canadian and foreign coins. I have found this to be one of the most common types made in North America and I believe it succeeded in its purpose — the advertising of the well-known firm of druggists in Montreal.

The company obtained a quantity of U. S. large cents and counterstamped them and these are the stamps most often encountered. In my own collection, I had all of the dates of U. S. large cents from 1826 through 1856 and seven or eight dates of earlier vintage, with the oldest being a 1798 date. This group included the 1821 and 1823 large cents, which are fairly scarce dates.

In large cent varieties were included the 1824 over 22, 1826 over 25, 1828 small date, various small and large letters, three varieties of 1839, 1843, (2 of the 3 varieties), 1844 over 81, and 1851 over 81.

I believe from this information that many of the pieces must have been struck about 1856. I have never seen a stamp on an 1857 large cent, which is the last year of issue and a scarce date.

The same counterstamp is to be found on quite a number of Canadian tokens, including the following: City Bank Penny of 1837; Quebec Half Penny; 1812 Half Penny Plain; (Breton 961); Various Montreal Bouquet Sou Tokens; City Bank Half Penny; Leslie Half Penny (Breton 718); Bank of Upper Canada Half Penny; Half Penny Token 1820 (Nova Scotia Breton 894).

Three different U. S. Colonials were also stamped — a Vermont Cent, Connecticut Cent, and Massachusetts Cent.

A number of years ago I was shown several foreign coins with the Devins & Bolton striking, but unfortunately did not have a chance to record the information accurately. A variety is known where just the word "Bolton's" appears on several different Canadian tokens.

With all the renewed interest in the counterstamped field, there is no doubt that other varieties will be located and listed.

In future articles I hope to cover other counterstamped Canadian material. I was very fortunate to live in the New England area where many thousands of the tokens could be located in years past. Numbers of these pieces circulated in northern and other parts of New England, so they are to be found with old lots and estates.

Let me add once more my thoughts about the hundreds of series I have collected over the years. I have found counterstamps to be the most exciting as there is much research to be done and many rare pieces to be found.

## *Hogan Offers Remarks On Few Auction Coins*

Patrick Hogan, Iowa City, Iowa, has a few remarks about several of the coins in the auction, and it's a pleasure to share his information with CQ readers.

"Lot number 762 contains the cmk of Trablus, which is Tripoli; also, this may be Atrablus, as MacKenzie and Lachman point out. They have made a case for Tripoli in Lebanon, an Ottoman pashalik, for this cmk, rather than the other Tripoli (Libya). This is mentioned in a letter in Spink's Numismatic Circular, March, 1973, in response to two cmkd Ottoman coins published by Dr. Henri Arroyo.

"Number 765 contains two cmks that are attributed to the island of Lesbos, to Ploumari. The Delta Pi stands for Demos Plomarion. The Islamic stamp is probably the similar stamp in Arabic script, although, there's supposed to be another one, but with Mytilene for Plomari. (I can't tell from the photograph.) There's usually a third stamping with a script Lambda on one side, and a script Pi on the other.

(Readers having information on any coins in the auction are urged to follow Hogan's example — get involved and share! — Ed.)

### *Attributions, Anyone?*

Anyone able to attribute any of the countermarks in the mail bid catalog is asked to forward that information to CQ, for publication in the next issue.

### CQ Needs Articles

There's a continuing, crying need for articles and photographs for publication in CQ. Short filler-types, 30 to 100 words in length, such as this one, are needed desperately.

This is YOUR newsletter ... Get involved! Don't leave it all to the "old pros;" they need a rest.